

airstrips, money laundering, and criminal organizations.

This approach can succeed. Over the last 5 years, the Governments of Peru and Bolivia, working with U.S. support, have reduced coca cultivation by more than half in their own countries, and cultivation fell by almost one-fifth in the region as a whole.

Of course, supply is only one side of the problem. The other is demand. I want the people of Colombia to know that the United States is working hard to reduce demand here, and cocaine use in our country has dropped dramatically over the last 15 years. We must continue our efforts to cut demand, and we will help Colombia fight the problems aggravated by our demand.

We can and we must do this together. As we begin the new century, Colombia must face not 100 years of solitude, but 100 years of partnership for peace and prosperity.

Last year I met some of the most talented and adorable children in the world from the village of Valledupar. Ten of them, some as young as 6 years old, came thousands of miles with their accordions and their drums, their bright-colored scarves and their beautiful voices, to perform for us here at the White House. They sang "*El Mejor*." They sang "*La Gota Fria*." Everyone who heard them was touched. Those precious children come from humble families. They live surrounded by violence. They don't want to grow up to be narcotraffickers, to be guerrillas, to be paramilitaries. They want to be kings of Vallenato. And we should help them live their dreams.

Thousands of courageous Colombians have given their lives to give us all this chance. Now is the moment to make their sacrifice matter. It will take vision; it will take courage; it will take desire. You have all three. In the midst of great difficulty, be strong of heart. *En surcos de dolores, el bien germina ya.*

Viva Colombia. Que Dios los bendiga.

NOTE: The address was videotaped at 9:50 a.m. on August 24 in the Map Room at the White House for broadcast in Colombia on August 29, and it was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on August 29. In his remarks, the President referred to President Andres Pastrana of Colombia.

The President's News Conference With President Andres Pastrana of Colombia in Cartagena

August 30, 2000

President Pastrana. Good afternoon. On behalf of all Colombians, it is my great privilege to welcome to Cartagena President Clinton, who has been Colombia's steadfast friend and honors us enormously with his visit today. I would also like to welcome the distinguished members of his delegation, starting with the Republican Party, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, a very good friend of Colombia, Dennis Hastert; and from the Democratic Party, another great friend of ours, Senator Joseph Biden.

You, Speaker Hastert, are not foreign to Colombia given that you have defended our democracy for many years now and have guided the assistance package through the House. Colombia is truly fortunate to have you as a friend, sir.

Senator Biden, we're also very pleased to have you once again here in Cartagena. Your understanding of the very complex issues related with Plan Colombia, from human rights to alternative development, have been crucial.

Senators Bob Graham and Mike DeWine are also with us today, two individuals who have led the way in the U.S.-Colombian relations, providing leadership in both trade and counternarcotics. They are with their colleague Senator Lincoln Chafee, who is visiting Colombia for the first time. Gentlemen, we are very honored with your presence.

However, there is a notable absence, that hurts our hearts, of another friend of Colombia, Paul Coverdell. His passing last month was a deeply-felt loss, and I cannot imagine how we would have gotten this far without him. We miss him, but what he did so bravely will allow us to—[inaudible].

I would also like to welcome our good friends from the House of Representatives Congressmen Douglas Bereuter, William Delahunt, Sam Farr, Porter Goss, Ruben Hinojosa, and Jim Moran. Each, in your own way, have worked for popular changes for our country.

I'd also like to welcome the members of the President's Cabinet: Secretary of State Madeleine Albright and Attorney General Janet Reno, leaders of the highest order who have visited us here before. You have taken the cause of burdensharing in the war on illegal drugs across the globe.

The same is true for General McCaffrey, who has worked tirelessly through very many complicated details of our bilateral strategy. And we're also proud to have with us Sandy Berger, National Security Adviser, and John Podesta, the White House Chief of Staff.

Two years ago I traveled to Washington with the high hopes of forming a new partnership with the United States. Today, it is clear, we have accomplished this gesture beyond our expectations. Today, there exists between our two countries a much closer commitment than at any other time in our history.

The United States Government and Congress have offered significant assistance to Plan Colombia, which is my government's strategy for national recovery. This package has been developed by Colombians, has been planned by Colombians, has been presented to the rest of the world by Colombians, and will be implemented by Colombia.

The very important resources support many of the central elements of the plan, including support of political negotiation, alternative developments for subsistent farmers, the battle against drugs, the strengthening of justice, humanitarian assistance, and the protection of human rights. The U.S. assistance is a recognition that the menace of illegal drugs is truly international and, therefore, requires a concerted global response.

We Colombians must address the many challenges our nation faces at this moment in history. We know that the solutions must be our own. Equally important is the understanding that Colombia's armed conflict must be solved by political means. We have asked the United States and the international community to provide us with new tools and additional resources to build the Colombia of the 21st century. We are grateful for the assistance you have provided.

Many times over the past decades, Colombians have felt alone in bearing the burden of the international drug war. Undoubtedly,

this is an international presence, and your presence here today, Mr. President, as a representative of the American people, is a commitment that leads us to know that we're no longer isolated in this struggle.

I'm also pleased we have had the opportunity today to discuss our bilateral economic agenda. Peace in Colombia is tied to prosperity, to economic growth, and new opportunities for all our people, and this includes expanding bilateral trade.

I believe the time has come to move towards an agreement that allows better access for Colombian products into the U.S. markets. I am convinced that, at the end of the day, trade and investment will do more for Colombia and will be more decisive instruments in the battle against drugs given that they will have a sustainable impact for future generations and will contribute to a more prosperous Colombia.

Today is indeed an historic occasion. It marks a decisive moment in a time when two nations join forces to attain common objectives. I have no doubt, ladies and gentlemen, that we have the right policies and that we will be implementing them in the right way and with the right partners.

Finally, I'd like to say that Colombia is most fortunate to have friends as President Clinton, who has earned admiration around the world for his commitment to peace in Northern Ireland, in the Middle East, Africa, and today here in Colombia. His legacy as one of his generation's most dedicated peacemakers is assured.

And now it is my privilege to invite the President of the United States to take over the microphone and the podium.

President Clinton. First, I want to thank President Pastrana, members of his government, and legislative leaders who have welcomed us so warmly here today. I'd also like to thank the members of the Colombian media who are responsible for the opportunity I had last night to address the people of Colombia about the commitment of the United States for the success of your democracy.

I'm pleased to be here with all the people the President mentioned: Speaker of the House Dennis Hastert, Senator Joe Biden, other Members of Congress and the Cabinet

and the White House, and I want to thank you, Mr. President, for your reference to Senator Coverdell, who was a friend of Colombia and a friend of our common efforts.

Together we come here to say that the United States—executive and Congress, Republican and Democrat, House and Senate—stand with Colombia in its fight for democracy.

In our meetings, I had a chance to thank President Pastrana for his truly courageous leadership, for a peaceful, prosperous, democratic country free of narcotrafficking. He has pursued this vision fearlessly, as has so many others. The 11 widows of those who gave their lives for the rule of law and human rights and a better future that we met earlier today are the most eloquent testimony of it.

The United States has a strong interest in Colombia, in your economic recovery of the country, in the conservation of your democracy, in the protection of human rights for the people of Colombia, and in your pursuit of peace, security, stability, not only for Colombia but for the whole region and, undoubtedly, in reducing the international drug trade.

Meeting those objectives, for us, is what Plan Colombia is all about. It takes aim at all the interwoven challenges facing Colombia both in the economy and in the civil conflict, fighting drugs, defending human rights, and deepening democracy. And as President Pastrana said, it is Plan Colombia: a plan made by the leaders of Colombia for the people and future of Colombia.

Our support of that plan includes a tenfold increase for social and economic development to help farmers grow legal crops, to train security forces to protect human rights, to help more Colombians find justice by extending access to the courts. This afternoon I will visit a new *casa de justicia* here in Cartagena that does just that. We've also made clear our confidence in President Pastrana's economic approach, and we're working closely with the international financial institutions to encourage their support of the Colombian economy.

Our assistance also makes a substantial investment in Colombia's counterdrug efforts. Drug trafficking breeds violence, breeds corruption, and drives away the jobs that could

help to heal this country's divisions. It also supplies most of the cocaine and much of the heroin to the United States. Our assistance will enhance the ability of Colombian security forces to eradicate illegal crops, destroy drug labs, stop drug shipments before they leave Colombia.

Let me make one point very clear: This assistance is for fighting drugs, not waging war. The civil conflict and the drug trade go hand in hand to cause great misery for the people of Colombia: 2,500 kidnappings in the last year alone; over the last 10 years 35,000 Colombian citizens have lost their lives; 1 million have been made homeless. Our program is antidrugs and propeace.

Forty years of fighting has brought neither side closer to military victory. The President himself has said that over and over. Counterdrug battalions will not change that, and that is not their purpose. Their purpose is to reduce the drug trade that aggravates every problem Colombia faces and exports chaos to the world, including the United States.

I reject the idea that we must choose between supporting peace or fighting drugs. We can do both; indeed, to succeed, we must do both. I reaffirmed to the President our support for the peace process. The people of Colombia have suffered long enough, especially in the area of human rights. No good cause has ever been advanced by killing or kidnapping civilians or by colluding with those who do. Insurgents and paramilitaries alike must end all human rights abuses, as must the security forces themselves.

The President is doing his part to hold the military accountable, and today we discussed his efforts to accelerate efforts to investigate, prosecute, and punish all offenders, whoever they may be.

What happens in Colombia will affect its citizens and this entire region for a very long time to come. There is a lot riding on this President and this Plan Colombia. We are proud to stand with our friend and our neighbor as it fights for peace, freedom, and democracy, for prosperity, human rights, and justice, and for a drug-free future. All these things should be the right of all Colombians.

Thank you.

[At this point, Speaker of the House of Representatives J. Dennis Hastert and Senator Joseph R. Biden, Jr., members of the U.S. delegation, made brief remarks.]

President Pastrana. Let us begin with the round of questions.

Colombia-U.S. Trade

Q. President Clinton, the Colombian Government has been working in order to obtain tariff benefits with the United States. Mr. President, with what do you commit yourself in order to open the way so that Colombia will benefit from benefits which are granted to other countries? And specifically, will the treaty that benefits the Colombian textile makers, will it be extended?

President Clinton. Well, the short answer is I hope so. But if I could, let me explain this issue not only to the Colombian press but to the American press, because it hasn't received a lot of attention.

We passed a very important bill this year to increase our trade with Africa, because we thought we had not done enough. And we have many African-Americans in the United States, as you do have citizens of African descent in Colombia and all over the eastern part of South America. In that bill, we also had legislation to give more duty-free access to goods from the Caribbean Basin, in the Caribbean. We did it because when we passed the NAFTA trade agreement back in 1993, benefiting our trade with Mexico enormously, it had the unintended consequence of putting a big burden on the Caribbean nations, mostly the little island nations, and it took us all this time to correct it.

Now, we know that this legislation could have severe unintended consequences on Colombia in ways that would undermine the impact of Plan Colombia. So Senator Graham, who is here on this delegation, and Senator DeWine and perhaps others who are here have sponsored a bill which would for one year, on the textile front, in effect, treat the Colombian textiles in the same way as those from the Caribbean island nations and the Central American nations. And that would prevent a mass migration of jobs out of Colombia, and it would give the next President and the new Congress a full year to de-

bate what the next step in the economic integration of our region should be.

So I will say, I will tell you the exact same thing I told the President and the Government inside. We are a couple of months away from an election. The Congress will not be in session much longer. But I think this should be done. The Speaker thinks it should be done. And we don't want the Congress to be in a position of having—or the administration either—of having to come up with over \$1 billion in aid that is partly designed to restore the Colombian economy and to move people out of coca production into legitimate earnings and then turn around and take the economic benefits away that were there before we started.

So it's a problem. There is a narrow legislative fix, which Senator Graham and others, Senator DeWine and others, have proposed, which—for the benefit of the American press—would not increase textile imports into our country over and above what they will be anyway over the next year but would keep massive migration of jobs from Colombia to other places in the Caribbean region from occurring. That's basically what Senator Graham's trying to do.

So I just—because it's so close to the end of the session, I wish I could promise you that this will happen. I cannot promise you it will happen. All I can tell you is I will try, and I hope we can do it.

Plan Colombia

Q. President Clinton, 10 years ago President Bush visited here with the same purpose as yours. And in the intervening years, the flow of drugs to the United States illegally has only increased. What makes you believe this new U.S. aid package, although it be part of a broader Colombian plan, can reverse that trend without drawing U.S. troops into a shooting war here?

President Clinton. Well, first of all, I think that there's a lot of evidence that the flow of drugs out of Colombia, per se, has increased, as Senator Biden said, because efforts in Bolivia and Peru and several other places have been relatively successful. But the overall problem in the United States is abating. Unfortunately, it's getting worse in some other parts of the world.

And I give a lot of credit to General McCaffrey, to the Attorney General, to the Secretary of State, and others. We have worked very hard on this. And I give a lot of credit to the Congress, including the majority party in Congress. There's been an enormous effort over the last 5 years to intensify our efforts to reduce demand in the United States and to more effectively deal with supply. So that's the first thing I would say. We have some evidence that we can succeed.

The second thing I would say is a condition of this aid is that we are not going to get into a shooting war. This is not Vietnam; neither is it Yankee imperialism. Those are the two false charges that have been hurled against Plan Colombia. You have a perfect right to question whether you think it will work or whether you think we've properly distributed the resources. But I can assure you—a lot of the opposition to this plan is coming from people who are afraid it will work. So that won't happen.

The third thing you asked me—I believe this will work because I think that this President and this government are willing to take the risks necessary to make it work. I think that they're working on developing military forces and police forces that both respect human rights and know they'll be held accountable for abuses and are honest and competent enough to be effective in this battle if the rest of us will give them the resources, support, and training to do it on a level that, at least in our experience—you heard Senator Biden, he's been in the Senate a long time—we have never seen this before at this level in Colombia.

And the fact that the President understands, that he's willing to do something—and I hope the people of Colombia will understand it and be patient with him. He's trying to do two things that no one's ever tried to do at once. But without it, I don't think either problem can be solved. He's trying to fight the narco trafficking and find a way to have a diplomatic solution to the civil unrest that has dogged Colombia for 40 years. It is a massive undertaking.

Anyway, to summarize, I believe this will work, number one, because we have some evidence that we can make a difference, in

the last 5 years; number two, because we have an enormously courageous and I think thoughtful President and plan and team here committed to it; and number three, there won't be American involvement in a shooting war because they don't want it and because we don't want it, because what we have to do is to empower them and then, if there are problems on their borders, to empower their neighbors to solve this with our support.

President Pastrana. I think that the situation today is totally different from the situation 10 years ago, first of all, because we have an integral program to fight against drug trafficking—this is something we did not have before—and this issue was approached only from the police standpoint. But today, for the first time, we are investing in the people.

Plan Colombia, as we have discussed with President Clinton, is not a plan for war. It's a plan for peace. It's a social plan. Seventy-five percent of Plan Colombia will go to social investment, to capacity-building, alternative development. And this is why, for the first time, what we now see is a comprehensive policy so as not to work only from one side but to see how, in an integral way, you can better put an end to the drug issue.

This is why, in addition to Plan Colombia, we're now implementing *Impresa Colombia*, which means that all the social resources of the Colombian states of \$4 or 5 billion that were contributing to Plan Colombia, we're going to allocate it to earmark these resources. They'll be going to the poorest regions, and we'll be investing in infrastructure, alternative development, agricultural policies, social investment, particularly in those areas which are now being affected by violence and civil unrest.

Only a year ago, in Colombia simply because—with the assistance of Speaker Hastert and other Democrat and Republican Senators, the U.S. had given us \$230 million for military equipment. And last year we had the largest U.S. investment in Colombia. Last year it was \$230 million invested in helicopters, and these went to the police. And today, a large amount will be invested only in the social area. So this means that \$250 million will be invested in the people, in our social development, and the promotion and

strengthening of human rights and alternative development.

And this is why I would like to highlight that for the first time the United States is investing not only—because it's not only military assistance—and I want to be very clear. The U.S. assistance is an assistance to fight against drug trafficking, and for this reason I say today that we Colombians must feel very pleased to see that this large amount—over \$250 million—will be invested in the marginal areas, in the poorest areas in Colombia.

President Clinton. Could I just follow up and just make one other point on this, again, just because I think it's important that what we do be clearly understood? We have received some criticism in the United States from people who say, well, a majority of the money we're giving is for military or law enforcement purposes. Even though the money we give, about \$300 million, for boosting government capacity and alternative economic development is a tenfold increase over what we were giving before, it is true that a majority of our assistance is for increasing the capacity of the Colombia people to fight the drug war. But it is important to recognize that that is true largely because we have a unique ability to give those tools to the Colombian forces.

And I want to reiterate what President Pastrana said, because this is what he said to me when he asked us to do this. He said, "I promise you three-quarters of the total investment of the plan will be for nonmilitary, non-law-enforcement things: to build government capacity, to develop the economic and social capacities of the country."

And so the American aid package needs to be seen in the larger context. And I want to thank—the United Nations has given money to this; Spain has given money; Norway has given money; Japan has given money; the international financial institutions—and the Government of Colombia is going to contribute a majority of the \$7.5 billion. And anyone within the sound of my voice—we still need another billion or billion and a half, and we would be glad to have some more help. [Laughter] Thank you very much.

Q. President Clinton, is there a specific situation in which the U.S. Government

might consider perhaps giving Colombia military support to fight the guerrillas?

President Clinton. Our involvement is laid out in the terms of Plan Colombia. The President has developed this plan with his team, and it does not contemplate that. And so, the answer is no. That's not authorized by what we did.

What we want to do is to increase the capacity of the Colombian Government to fight the narcotraffickers and, in so doing, to reduce anyone else's income from illegal drug trade and increase the leverage that the President has to find a peaceful resolution of the civil conflict. And that is his policy, not my policy. I'm supporting his policy.

President Pastrana. Once again, in order to make it very clear, while Andres Pastrana is the President of Colombia, we will not have a foreign military intervention in Colombia.

Plan Colombia and Human Rights

Q. Mr. President, several Democratic lawmakers and human rights organizations have criticized you for waiving six conditions, the majority on human rights, in order to release the \$1.3 billion for this plan. How do you reconcile the waiver with your policy of protecting human rights around the world? And President Pastrana, how long will it take you to meet those conditions, and are they realistic?

President Clinton. First of all, let me say why I did the waiver and begin by saying I support strongly human rights, and I support the human rights provisions of Plan Colombia or, if you will, the human rights requirements for disbursing the aid under Plan Colombia. But there is a reason Congress gave me waiver authority here. Not because they didn't care about human rights, but because they knew that President Pastrana was committed to human rights. He was committed to human rights before he was President of Colombia. He was committed to human rights before he thought of Plan Colombia and before he ever asked us to help. And I would remind you that he has been the victim of perhaps the most severe human rights abuse of all.

So the Congress gave me the waiver authority because they knew there was no way,

between the time that they appropriated the money and we needed to spend it, that he could meet every criteria in the legislation, but that if I thought he was committed to doing so and acting in good faith, I could give a waiver so we wouldn't wait another year.

I don't think anyone seriously believes that either the guerrillas or the narcotraffickers will be more careful with human rights than this President. And so creating another year of vacuum in which innocent people can be crushed I think would be a terrible mistake.

On the other hand, you heard what Joe Biden said. If there is to be continued support from the Congress and the next President, then Colombia must meet the requirements of the law. And the President said to me repeatedly that—and he just said publicly that he was. I think I should let him address that.

President Pastrana. As I have told President Clinton and many of my colleagues—journalists, the issue of human rights is not imposed on us by the U.S. Government or by President Clinton. It is the first commitment of the Colombian government of President Pastrana to fight against the violation of human rights.

As of the moment when we proposed Plan Colombia, as I've had the opportunity of telling several of you, we knew that the eyes of the world would be focusing on our country and particularly regarding the issue of human rights.

But we're also asking the rest of the world to understand the complexity of the problems that we have in our country. And many times it's difficult for people to understand that we have the illegal defense groups or the guerrilla drugtrafficking common criminals. But likewise, I think that we have made a lot of headway. We have greater alertness on the part of the members of our military forces, and we are demanding the insurgents and the illegal defense groups to better understand that they have to cooperate in terms of not violating human rights. And hopefully, the first agreements to be made in the negotiation peace talks will be related with international humanitarian law and human rights, so as to exclude the civil population and

minor combatants from this conflict. Hopefully, we'll be able to arrive at this agreement.

And in addition, we've done a lot also on our part. We have passed the new criminal code; and issues which are very sensitive—such as forced disappearance, genocide, torture—will be dealt with by civil courts; and we have reformed the criminal and military code—we devoted a lot of years to this reform, but today it's a fact—and finally, the Government itself, via the Minister of Defense, has asked for special powers by Congress so as to reform our military forces—and these powers will expire in the future weeks—and this will allow us to get rid of people who are with the military and that might be linked to any human rights violation issues. And it's going to be very important, because in the past our laws did not allow us to do this.

And we gave this as a signal to the rest of the world. The Vice President of Colombia is the person in charge of this issue of human rights. Never before in Colombia has the Vice President and the Vice President's office been in charge of this very important topic in order to promote all our policies regarding human rights.

And I think that many of the proposals made by Congress in order to give Colombia certification for the purposes of Plan Colombia will be achieved in the future weeks. And hopefully, with these reforms that I have mentioned, we'll make headway. But this is a commitment of our Government, and we will support, of course, human rights.

Plan Colombia and Neighboring Countries

President Clinton. Because I expect this is my last trip here before the end of my term, there's one point I did not make in my opening statement that I should have. On behalf of the President and the people of Colombia, I would like to make a personal plea to the neighbors of Colombia and the leaders of those neighboring states—with whom I have worked closely for years, most of them—to be strongly supportive of President Pastrana and Plan Colombia.

There have been many reports that others are reluctant in Latin America to support this

for fear that the Plan Colombia, as it succeeds, will cause the problem to spill over the borders into other states. Now, let's be candid: If it's successful, some of that will happen. But we have funds in Plan Colombia, in the American portion of it, that can be used, a substantial amount of money, to help other countries deal with these problems at the borders right when they start.

And I would ask the neighbors of Colombia to consider the alternative. If you really say Colombia can't attack this in an aggressive way because there will be some negative consequences on our border, the logical conclusion is that all the cancer of narco-trafficking and lawless violence in this entire vast continent should rest on the shoulders and burden the children of this one nation. And that's just not right.

And so, I understand the reluctance of the leaders of other countries to embrace this. It's a frightening prospect to take on this. But this man, more than once, has risked his life to do it. So I just want to assure the other countries the United States will not abandon you. We actually have specific provisions in this bill to provide assistance to neighboring countries that suffer adversely because of the disruptions. But this is something that the democratic leaders of this continent should do together, arm in arm, hand in hand. We will be as supportive as we can, but in the end, they'll have to do it together in order to succeed.

And again, Mr. President, I thank you, and I want to thank the leaders of our Congress from the bottom of my heart for doing what I think is a good thing for America to do. Thank you, sir.

NOTE: The President's 193d news conference began at 3:05 p.m. in la Casa de Huespedes. In his remarks, the President referred to NAFTA, the North American Free Trade Agreement. President Pastrana referred to Vice President Lemas Gustavo Bell of Colombia. President Pastrana spoke in Spanish, and his remarks were translated by an interpreter. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of Senator Biden and Speaker Hastert. A portion of the President's remarks

could not be verified because the tape was incomplete.

Statement on Department of Health and Human Services Action on Federal Services for People With Limited English Proficiency

August 30, 2000

Today I commend the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) for being the first Federal agency to respond to Executive Order 13166, which will help people with limited English proficiency (LEP) access Federal and federally funded services. The HHS policy guidance issued today will assist health and social service providers to ensure that LEP individuals can access critical health and social services, and will assist our efforts to eliminate health disparities between LEP and English-speaking individuals. The guidance outlines the legal responsibilities of providers who assist people with limited English proficiency and receive Federal financial assistance from HHS and provides a flexible roadmap to assist those providers in their efforts to meet the language needs of the Nation's increasingly diverse population.

On August 11, 2000, I issued Executive Order 13166, which directed Federal agencies, by December 11, 2000, to establish written policies on the language accessibility of their programs and the programs of those who receive Federal funds. Federal agencies and recipients of Federal financial assistance must take reasonable steps to ensure that persons with limited English proficiency can meaningfully access their programs. Language barriers are preventing the Federal Government and recipients of Federal financial assistance from effectively serving a large number of people in this country who are eligible to participate in their programs. Failure to systematically confront language barriers can lead to unequal access to Federal benefits based on national origin and can harm the mission of Federal agencies. Breaking down these barriers will allow individuals